NH Forestry Success Stories

Forest Regeneration (Picture 1)

In Western New Hampshire, several unfragmented blocks of private forest land make up the Quabbin to Cardigan focus area. This area is one of the largest contiguous deciduous forests in the United States and is characterized by several conservation easements, fantastic water quality, few invasive plants, productive soils and high quality timber. Historically, these areas have provided the region with ample supplies of White Pine, Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, and Ash. NRCS prioritizes landowners in this region for funding of Timber Stand Improvement to release crop trees and where possible regenerate desired species with group selections of non-economically viable species. The Loomis property provides an excellent example of forest regeneration and crop tree release in an area which was high-graded in the 1970's. The below photo shows group selections of poor quality beech, hemlock and red maple, to promote high quality hardwoods on 50 acres.

Pine Barrens Restoration (Picture 2)

Pine Barrens are a fire dependant globally declining ecosystem. In New Hampshire, several outwash plains were mined for sand and gravel and developed. Along the Ossippee River The Nature Conservancy and The Society for The Protection of New Hampshire Forests with support from NRCS have conducted harvests to reduce fuel loads, install fire breaks and conducted controlled burns to promote fire tolerant vegetation and restore these areas. These areas provide habitat to several declining wildlife species, such as Brown Thrashers and Whip-poor-will's. The below photo shows the Harmon Preserve, owned by SPNHF which has just been harvested to prepare the area for a controlled burn.

Riparian Buffer Plantings (Pic 3)

2010 was a record year for planting Riparian Buffers in New Hampshire with over 30 acres installed on the Saco and Connecticut Rivers. Both these rivers have reduced water quality from siltation and excess nutrients. 3 of the top 5 rivers most at risk for water quality degradation are in New Hampshire and climate change appears to be bringing more intense storms to New England with several 50 year rain fall events in the last 5 years. Although these areas are the highest yielding soils in the state, farmers understand that taking a few acres out of production helps the environment and protects their property from rapid erosion during these high flow events. From funding through the NY/NE forestry initiative, NRCS has teamed up with The Nature Conservancy and Trout Unlimited to provide outreach and technical assistance to private landowners with a goal of installing more buffers in FY2012.

Stream Restoration (Pic 4 and 5)

Ann Davis, the President of New Hampshire Timber Owner's Association (TOA) and her husband Mark, are continuing to improve their 500+ acre property in Springfield, NH with several conservation practices. In recent years they have installed several small timber bridges to maintain stream connectivity and are currently in the process of planning some wood additions to the streams. The

Davis' are enthusiastic about the practice, due to several benefits in-stream wood provides including dissipating flood velocities, re-engaging floodplains and improving trout habitat. No only does in-stream wood create deeper pools which help trout in dry summer months, but it also provides escape cover and collects leaves and twigs which develop into insects and invertebrates for food.